A SEA-CHANGE.

A spacious grave, the boundless sea,
O vanished friend, containeth thee;
Tempests will chant thy dirge;
The ocean bird, on airy wing,
A lullaby for thee shall sing
To the responsive surge.

Far in the bosom of the deep,
Star-splendid eyes o'er-watch thy sleep;
And Heaven all tranquil smiles:
Large tides of love moon-drawn appear,
And lead thee round the watery sphere,
Where gleam the golden isles.

Thou sailest undeterred and free—
The storm, the calm, alike to thee;
Earth's furthest shores are thine.
A sealed casket of content,
Thou goest till the years be spent;
Dead, but oh! still divine.

Companionship thou lackest not;
The sea hath scarce one lonely spot;
The lifeless throng its halls,
With living weed around them furled,
Or circumnavigate the world,
In silence that appals.

Toss on thy course, my solemn friend—
Toss on, unspeaking to the end,
With peace upon thy brow;
We who live here, and dream we know
Of all above and all below,
Are not so wise as thou.

And we shall meet, pale wanderer, yet,
When Death his seal on me has set,
And opening Heaven I see;
Now far across the foam I fling
The spirit of the song I sing,
In faint farewells to thee.

THE SILVER LOCKET.

CHAPTER I.

I am a plain-clothes officer, James Dryland by name, age thirty-five, married. If it had not been for the deepness of Sigismund Hannay I should have been still a bachelor. Of course Sigismund Hannay was only indirectly concerned in my marriage, but undoubtedly if it had not been for him I should have been still a bachelor.

It came about, you see, this way: I had been thirteen years in the police, I had served as a constable, I had served as a sergeant, there was nothing against me. I was a plain-clothes officer at last, and on my promotion I had hoped to marry. Annie—that's my wife—was a nice girl, an only child, and a bit above me, I own it; but I had walked out with Annie since she was seventeen, that's five years ago, so you see she is quite a young thing, now only three-and-twenty. Annie's old father was very proud of her, proud of her good looks, proud of her education, which, as I said, is above mine, and proud of her having been left a thousand pounds, which he had the use of for his life, but which on his death came to Annie.

Annie, then, was an heiress in a small way. Annie's father, old Day, lived in a little house in Hoxton. Five years ago I walked past it when I was looking for fresh lodgings. It seemed very neat and clean, and in the window was a card, "Lodgings for a respectable single man." I am a single man, said I, the place will suit me—just suit me. I knocked, the door was opened. Annie appeared; I asked to see the lodgings. Instead of showing them to me she said, "You can see father." I saw father. Old Day was sitting by the fire, his legs wrapped up in a rug.

"Good day," says he.

"Morning," says I, and I began asking about his lodgings. But he never answered me one word.

"Are you respectable?"

"Of course I am," says I.

"What are you?"

"An officer," says I.

"Sheriff's officer?" with a grin. "Won't do," says he.

"No, police," said I, indignant-like.

"That's better. But," said he, with a sort of reckon-you-up look, "how about respectability, though?"

"You can ask my inspector," said I; "he's in of a morning till noon."

"Won't do—it isn't good enough."

"Good morning," says I, getting up, and feeling very riled with the old fellow.

"Sit still—I mean it isn't good enough for me: I can't go to him. I'm only half a man; my lower half wrong. Can you do for yourself, policeman?" said the old man.

"No objection to," said I; and after some ten minutes' talking it was arranged that I was to see the rooms, and if I liked them I could have them very cheap; all he wanted was protection for himself and daughter. "I can't stand women," said he, "and you can take the girl out a bit now and then."

I opened my eyes, but the old man meant no harm; I was a policeman, that was enough for him, and he didn't consider that policemen have hearts. We settled it: I saw the rooms, my inspector was to call round and speak for me. He did call, and he satisfied old Day. I went to live at Hoxton. I did as he suggested. I took the girl out now and then. I was a steady man, she was a steady girl; no harm came of it—why should there? But we fell in love. I spoke to the old man.

"Jim," said he, "it can't be done. You're but a common policeman; my girl will have some money, and it can't be, Jim."

This was the first I'd heard of money. I pleaded; all no use. Annie pleaded; no use. Next day the old man called me into his parlor; there he sat all day, like an old toad in a tree; he never moved—he couldn't, poor old chap!

"Sit down," says he. "Jim, I've thought it over," and then he told me of the thousand pounds.

"Now," says he, "I'm a cripple, Jim, and I can't part with my girl, and she won't get the money till I'm dead. There is one way; stay on where you are, Jim, go on as you are, and when you've earned 500 pounds, why take my girl; stay on here with me, and when I'm gone she shall have the money—a thousand pounds. It's a fair offer, Jim; what do you say?"

What could I say? I was worth something under fifty pounds at the time; how could I earn 500 pounds?

"It's to take or leave," said old Day.

"I agree," said I. Not that I had any idea that I should ever get 500 pounds together, but I didn't like to leave Annie.

"You won't mention it to Annie, Jim?"

"Not I," said I.

He slapped his hand into mine, and he lit his pipe; he never said another word on the subject again. Things went on as they had done. I used to see Annie about, and take my walks with her, and I used to read the paper of an evening to the old man, just as usual. He always used to make me begin with the agony column.

One night I sat prepared to begin reading to him.

"Anything in my way?" said he. He meant agonies.

"Nothing," said I.

"Anything in your way, Jim?" He meant the rewards for lost property, criminals, and such like.

"Only Sigismund Hannay," said I.

"Who's he?" said old Day.

Now, I hadn't read the continual advertisements about Sigismund Hannay to him, for when a big reward was offered he would put down his pipe with an irritating way he had, and, grinning at me, say:

"That's a nice little sum, Jim Dryland; why don't you earn it?"

I began, "Five hundred pounds reward."

"That's the exact sum, Jim Dryland," says he; "why don't you earn it?"

I didn't answer him; I was too much disgusted. I read the advertisement. No need to read it; I knew it by heart. I know it by heart now. This is what it was:

"Five Hundred Pounds Reward.—Wanted, Sigismund Hannay, who has absconded, taking with him the following securities" (here followed a long list of bonds that the criminal had taken with him). "A percentage will be paid in addition upon all the securities recovered.

"Sigismund Hannay, a native of Saxony, is five feet ten inches high, stoops a little, speaks English fluently, with a slight German accent; when much excited his right eyelid droops slightly. Had on when last seen shepherd's plaid trousers, a cutaway coat and vest of black diagonal cloth, plain gold shirt-studs, a tall hat with a black mourning band, Edwards maker; brown merino socks, and light Oxonian shoes. He has curly chestnut hair, blue eyes, slight mustache, and beard same color; is of pleasing personal appearance and manners. All communications to Inspector Roberts, Scotland Yard."

"Read it again, Jim."

I read it again; old Day never said one word. I read the paper through to him. When I'd finished, and risen to bid him good-night, he said—

"Read it again, Jim."

"Read what?" said I.

"About him," said the old man.

I knew very well what he meant. "If I were a young man, Jim Dryland; if I had my sweetheart's happiness and my own happiness depending on it, I'd find Sigismund Hannay, leastways I'd try to." That's what he meant.

He wished me good-night, just as he always did. Annie shook hands; I just squeezed hers.

And I went to bed, to dream, as I had dreamt for some time, of Sigismund Hannay, the native of Saxony, five feet ten inches high, etc. I had been to Scotland Yard, and I had seen Inspector Roberts. He told me it was a City case, not in my way at all. I was mostly concerned in other things, and the inspector shewed me Hannay's portrait.

There he sat, the man who was worth five hundred pounds to me, and more, perhaps. Of course it wasn't likely that I should be put on to the trapping of Sigismund Hannay—not likely. I had my own regular work. Still I heard all there was to hear about him. That was not much. There was not the slightest clew to Hannay or the securities.

Old Day had been in his time at attendant at a private madhouse—what you call a keeper, you know—and many a curious yarn he could tell of those madhouses, and the goings on in the old days; but now he said it was all changed, all fair and square, and straightforward.

Some twenty years before, Day had been sent to a special job; he was attendant to the insane son of a man of rank; he stayed there, married a servant in the family, and when the patient died, out of gratitude for the care he took of his son, the gentleman settled 1,000 pounds on old Day. Old Day lived on that fifty pounds a year, and his savings. Mrs. Day died, and the old fellow, being alone with his girl, took me to live with them as watch-dog, as I have related. Now old Day had one great friend, old Stewart. Old Stewart was an attendant at a large private asylum in the environs of London. Whenever old Stewart had an hour or two to spare, he would come and sit and smoke with his old comrade Day—he was very fond of old Day, he was, very fond; but he was also fond of Annie, and he was fifty if he was a day. I didn't like old Stewart, but I took care not to show it, and I took care not to seem jealous of him, but I was, for all that.

In those days I used to study French. I thought it might get me on in the force, and I worked hard at it. I sat poring over my grammar in old Day's room, when who should come in but Stewart. I wished him good evening, but I returned to my work, and, elbows on the table, I ground away at my verbs.

I thought of Stewart and Annie. Stewart's presence seemed to annoy me. I could not concentrate my attention; involuntarily I began to listen to their talk, as usual about the "establishment," as they called it.

"New boarders yesterday," said Stewart—they never called them madmen, but "boarders."

"Bad case?" said old Day.

"Um," said Stewart; "curious case; he beats me, the fellow does. I've been on asylum work, man and boy, this thirty-three year, and he's the first boarder I ever see as liked it—and he does, he likes it."

"Likes it," said old Day as if he was being chaffed; "you don't say that?"

"I do, though," said Stewart; "that's just it, he likes it! There weren't no fuss at all when 'the Winker' comes in." (I noticed they mostly had nicknames for their patients which they used among themselves.) "'I think I'll go to bed at once,' says he, quite quiet like. 'I think I'll go to bed at once. Are you a keeper?' says he. 'Show me my room.' 'I'm an attendant, sir,' says I. 'All the same,' says he, and he tips me a little wink. I marches him off into one of our doubles" (meaning a double-bedded room) "as per usual. 'I'll valet you, sir,' says I. 'You can go,' says he, cool as a cucumber, tipping me another wink; however, there I stood, a-waiting on him, and feeling each of his pockets for knives and such like. I leaves him his watch, and I leaves him his money till I gets my orders, and as he jumps into bed, without a-saying of his prayers, says I to myself, 'You won't be here long, young fellow.'

"'What are you taking my clothes for?'

"'Taking to brush,' says I.

"'Just so,' says he, with another wink—that cool he took me aback. 'Good night,' says he.

"'Good night, sir,' says I.

"And five minutes after, when I come back, he was as sound as a house."

"Rum case," said Day.

"I believe you," said old Stewart. "I goes in to the doctor for my instructions. 'Safe in bed, sir,' says I.

"'Very good,' says he.

"'I suppose I'd better sleep in his room, sir?'

"'Oh no; quite needless,' said he, taking me all of a heap; 'he's a chronic case.'

"'About his things, sir?' said I.

"'Oh, he can retain them,' said he, in his stand-off way. You might have knocked me down with a feather, Day."

I heard no more. I didn't listen; their talk didn't interest me. Stewart left after supper.

Many of these chats took place between Day and Stewart of an evening. Gradually I dropped into their conversation unawares; there was no secrecy; the two men seemed at loggerheads about one of the patients. Stewart stoutly maintained that one of the "boarders" at Selby House was sane. Old Day laughed at him.

"One would think we were in the old times, Stewart. And the man attempts no escape, and seems comfortable, and is sane—pooh!"

"The Winker's as sane as I am, Jack," sulkily asserted Stewart, "and what's more, the doctor and the 'prop' had words about him the other day."

By the "prop" he meant the proprietor, who was not a doctor at all, as he told us. The two old fellows wrangled over the pros and cons of the matter till supper time.

"By the way, I found a locket, Annie, to-day," said Stewart to my Annie. I didn't like his calling her Annie, but he was an old man, and presumed on it.

"Would you like to see it?" She nodded, and he drew from his pocket a battered silver locket. In it were two colored portraits, an old lady with little old-fashioned curls at her temples on one side, the portrait of a handsome boy with curling hair on the other. I looked at him with interest. I seemed to have seen his face before, but couldn't recall it.

"It won't be long before it's claimed," said Stewart, "and the find will not be worth much to me. I expect it belongs to one of our boarders. What's it worth, sergeant?" said he, passing it to me.

"A matter of five shillings, I should say," weighing it in my palm. And I noticed that on each side was a worn monogram—M. S. V. on one side, H. S. on the other. Stewart put the old locket in his pocket, and, supper over, took his leave.

I soon went to my bed, but not to sleep. The five hundred pounds reward didn't give me much chance of that. Wanted, Sigismund Hannay. His defrauded employers couldn't want their bonds more than I wanted Sigismund Hannay and the five hundred pounds which depended upon his capture. I slept at last, to dream that I had captured him on an iceberg in the Polar seas, and I woke shivering, to find that my struggles with the visionary culprit had ended in my kicking off my bed clothes, which accounted for the Arctic regions.

I used to go down to the head office to see what was doing occasionally, and among the many photos of the wanted ones I again saw the comely features of Sigismund Hannay. I gazed on his face with rapt attention; in my mind's eye I filled in the details which the photo failed to give—the chestnut hair, the blue eyes. "I shall know you when I see you, my friend," said I to myself. Stay, there was something almost familiar about the photograph—a something that seemed familiar; but I said to myself that I had so often looked with longing eyes at this photograph that it doubtless seemed an old acquaintance. No, Sigismund Hannay had surely ere this cleared out of England; doubtless the United States—the longed-for bourne of the hunted English criminal—had been reached, and Sigismund Hannay and his bonds were beyond even the long arm of the London police.

Next evening Stewart came in again. We played a rubber, Annie and I against the two old men; then we sat down to supper. After supper Stewart told us that he found the owner of the locket. "And he's a mean hound, is 'the Winker'; he says he'll give half a crown for it, and it's worth a crown to melt, isn't it, sergeant?" said he, tossing it across the table to me.

"I'll get you more than a crown for it," said I. "It's worth three half-crowns as old silver; why, it's thick and heavy—very heavy."

"Keep it and see what you can get me for it, sergeant," said Stewart. "He's a mean hound; I wouldn't care if it was one of the other boarders, poor chaps; they haven't any cash, save an odd shilling or so, while the 'Winker,' he's piles, piles; notes, too, as I'm a living man! What did I tell you? There's a screw loose somewhere, Day; there's some game on. When did you ever see a boarder, Jack Day, with his pocket-book full of notes?—notes, Jack. When did you ever see a boarder as slep' his first night alone? Alone, Jack Day!" cried the excited man.

"Why do you call him 'the Winker,' Stewart?" I asked.

"It's a rule we have; none of the boarders' names are ever mentioned off the premises; it's a fine—five bob."

"But what is his name?" said I.

"Hoffmann!" said Stewart.

"Stewart!" cried old Day.

"Well," apologized Stewart, "the sergeant is one of us, or nearly so; but as for 'the Winker'—"

"You haven't told me why you call him 'the Winker'," persisted I.

"Because he was always a-winking the day he came in; he seldom does it now, only when he's riled; he did wink, though, over the old locket; he made an awful fuss over it, and the 'prop' says it must be found. Found be hanged, say I; that Winker is a mean hound!"

By this time Stewart had had quite enough; he bade us good-night and went away.

I forgot the locket next day. When at the Scotland Yard office I felt it in my pocket, and I remembered that I had promised to ascertain its value. I opened it out of curiosity; there was the old lady—a fine old lady; there was the youth—a handsome youth. I was going to close the locket. Stay, there's something familiar about that handsome face, that curly, chestnut hair, those blue eyes—can it be——? My hand closes on the locket with a convulsive clutch, I feel faint like and sit down. Then I walk up to the portraits of the "Wanted." There they are—the hang-dog, villanous men, the low-browed, scowling women, thief and ruffian written on all their faces. From all stands out in smiling comeliness Sigismund Hannay, the bright young German. It is very like him! It is—it must be he! Taken, perhaps, some years ago, the boy of the locket would become the celebrity of the criminal portrait gallery.

I returned home and carefully examined the locket; I took out the likenesses; both were cut from ordinary cartes de visite and colored; on the back of the youth's is the photographer's address—Sachsen (Saxony). It is almost enough. I carefully replace them and close the locket with a snap. H. S. on the name-plate, why not S. H.? They are merely intertwined letters. It is enough! I have found him!

CHAPTER II.

I said I had found him. I thought I had, but between seeing the clew, or rather thinking you see it, and catching your man there is a great distance. Here is the position, if my theory is correct. Sigismund Hannay, under the alias of Mr. Hoffman, is incarcerated under false pretences, to which he is probably a consenting party, in Selby House.

Who are his accomplices? All the sane inhabitants in Selby House? That is unlikely, with a reward of 500 pounds on his head. It is some years ago that the occurrences I am narrating happened. Now, Sigismund Hannay would have smiled on the British public from a board outside every police station. Then the only portrait of Sigismund Hannay was that in the office in Scotland Yard—and, perhaps, the one in the locket in my hand. Consequently, the keepers in Selby House need not be the accomplices of Sigismund Hannay. There remain the resident proprietor and the doctor. I remembered Stewart saying "the doctor and the 'prop' had words about him the other day." Then his bank notes. Who ever heard of a lunatic with bank notes, except, perhaps, those of the Bank of Elegance? But then, if he had these notes and the piles of money Stewart talked of, why didn't he offer more for the old locket he wanted back, and that the proprietor had said must be found?

He was afraid to offer much, and so attract attention to himself.

If he were insane, why, when Stewart put him in a double-bedded room, as was the custom at Selby House, did he sleep alone. If he were a sane man, and it seemed Stewart had no doubt of it, why didn't he try to escape? Because he didn't want to. The only person, then, really in the secret, might be the proprietor, the doctor being merely mystified, and possibly in doubt; for Sigismund Hannay, if it were he, could only have been placed in the asylum on the certificate of two medical men and a friend or relative. Were the two medical men and the friend or relative accomplices? Not necessarily; Sigismund Hannay might have deceived them; he might have shammed mad. Or—though this was an unlikely theory—Sigismund Hannay, incarcerated as Hoffmann, might be really mad. Or, Hoffmann might not be Hannay at all. Alas! a very possible solution.

But then, the nickname, "the Winker." Why did Hannay or Hoffmann wink continually the first day, or rather evening, of his arrival at Selby House? If insane and Hoffmann, because he was under great excitement at his incarceration. If sane and Hannay, because he was excited at the thought of pursuit, or feared the other inmates—a very natural fear. Why did the winking pass off? In either case, because the excitement had ceased. Why did it suddenly return on the loss of the locket. Because again there was cause for excitement. Did "the Winker," Hannay or Hoffmann, as the case may be, wink with his right eye, his left eye, or both? Only to be determined by seeing him wink. It would not do to arouse Stewart's suspicions by more questions. If he droops his right eyelid, he is probably, or rather possibly, Hannay; if the left, or both, certainly not. How to ascertain?

Only by seeing him.

How to see him?

Only by entering Selby House. I cogitated. If I attempted an entrance by stratagem or ruse, and were detected as an impostor the first time, there could be no second attempt. Weighing all these things in my mind, hurriedly I am afraid, for the fear was ever before me that, even were my theory right that Hoffman was Sigismund Hannay, hidden in Selby House by some artful conspiracy, yet I might not be first in the field. Stewart might see the advertisement, and might guess, as I had done, that Hannay was the supposed lunatic. Time then pressed. Stewart might at any time give information and forestall me; that he had suspicions of foul play of some sort I was certain. I must act at once. I went into Inspector Roberts's office, I saw him, alone. I asked for a week's leave—I, who had never taken a day, save when on two occasions off duty on account of health.

"Your application can go in," said he.

I demurred. I wanted it then, that moment.

"Is it a family bereavement?"

"No, not a bereavement."

"Quite impossible, then; against all rules."

"Inspector, I may lose my sweetheart if you don't give it me," said I.

"Speak plainly, my man; if I can strain a point I will, but speak plainly."

I did not hesitate. I told him of old Day's bargain with me, and—here my voice sank to a whisper—"I think I have a clew to him," I said, and I pointed to the bill offering the 500 pounds for Hannay, which was fastened with others by tin tacks to the wall behind the inspector.

"Sergeant Dryland," said the inspector, "this is no matter for trifling. Are you quite serious?"

I assured him of my seriousness.

"You are a young and comparatively inexperienced officer," said the inspector; "I will associate some one with you——" He stretched his hand toward his bell.

"Inspector Roberts!" I said, with a gasp, "I should lose the reward—and I honestly believe I can put my hand on Sigismund Hannay in forty-eight hours."

The inspector paused. "It's a great responsibility, Sergeant Dryland," said he, "a great responsibility. I'm an inspector of police, but I feel for you—don't disappoint me," he said. As he spoke he raised the lid of his desk, and without a word he placed in my hands a pair of light steel handcuffs.

"On my own responsibility," he said, "I give you sixty sours' leave, Sergeant Dryland. Don't, don't disappoint me." I thanked him, and putting the handcuffs in my pocket, left his office.

As I walked down the stairs I felt that the inspector had trusted me, and that I must not abuse his confidence. Unless I succeeded in clapping those neat handcuffs of his on Sigismund Hannay, I never could hold up my head again. The die was cast, and I had staked my all upon the throw.

I reconnoitred Selby House; it was in Chelsea—a high wall—nothing remarkable—a big, old-fashioned house; on the door was a very small plate, Mr. Blank, the proprietor's name. Another smaller door at the side of the house with a bell-handle and the old-fashioned bell in an iron cage, as was once common in big suburban houses; on this door was written in staring white letters "Servants' Entrance." In the door was a small grating with an inner shutter. I rang the bell; the shutter opened; I saw the face of an old man.

"Can I see Mr. Stewart, an attendant here?"

"What's your business?"

"Merely a friendly call; name of Dryland, please."

"I'll see."

The shutter closed with a snap. I waited patiently five minutes, ten minutes; as I raised my hand, my patience being exhausted, to ring the bell a second time, the door noiselessly and suddenly opened, and Stewart, bareheaded, stood before me.

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" said he, holding the handle of the door in his hand; "nothing wrong, I hope?"

"No, nothing with them at Hoxton—nothing. Can you give me a few minutes?"

"Step inside," said he. "I can't leave the house; I'm on duty."

Nothing could have happened more opportunely if I had planned it; Stewart had evidently no suspicion of me.

"Take a seat," said he, pointing to a bench just inside the door. We were in a small flagged courtyard, half of which was covered with a roof of corrugated iron; three sides a dead wall, evidently the back of Selby House; two windows only on the ground floor. These were heavily barred, as is usual with the basement windows of large houses; they were evidently the kitchens. The smell of cooking came from the half-opened windows; the bustle of active work and the clatter of crockery could be heard.

"Busy place," said I.

"Boarders' dinner," said he.

"You feed them well," said I, as a most appetizing display was carefully arranged on a small tray by a kitchen-maid. Plated entree dish, two vegetables, roll and butter, and a pint bottle of claret.

"Winker's lunch," he said. "I must take it up. Wait for me."

I nodded, and composed myself comfortably on the bench. Just as Stewart was about to enter the kitchen door, a surly looking young man, with the appearance of a gentleman's servant and carrying a carpet-bag, entered the courtyard, followed by an old man in a striped jacket—the old man who had asked my business at the grating in the door; he was about to open the outer door; he held a bunch of keys—doubtless the hall porter.

"Going, Randall?" said Stewart, turning to the surly looking young man.

"Yes, Mr. Stewart, I'm off, and glad of it."

"Better luck next time, Randall," said Stewart, hurrying in; "good-by."

They nodded, and the surly looking young man and his carpet-bag disappeared into the street.

The porter looked at his watch and gave a yawn; then he sniffed the balmy odors of the kitchen, sat down by me and gave a sigh. "Friend of Stewart's?" said he.

I nodded.

"In our line?" he added, looking me over.

"No such luck," I replied; "they didn't feed us in my late business."

"What was that?" said he, carelessly.

"Police," said I.

"Left it long?" said he.

"This very morning; an hour ago."

"Um," grunted the porter, stretching his legs; "he was in it—Randall was, before he came to us."

"What! the young chap just gone out?"

"Yes; bad-tempered chap; couldn't keep his temper with the boarders—sack," he said, laconically.

"What's the screw?" said I.

"Varies," said he. "A pound to beginners, and found three square meals a day; but we only recruit steady men."

"I suppose so," said I.

Here we subsided into meditation. How was I to see the man Hoffmann? I was as far from my goal as ever. Hoffmann, alias "the Winker," might be really a lunatic; or he might not be Hannay. A sight of him would be enough for me; but how to get a sight of him? Why had I told the porter that I had left the police that morning? Because I hoped to replace Randall, if only for a few hours, and so to see, if but for an instant, the man called Hoffmann. Doubtless if I suggested my being engaged at Selby House they would be suspicious; the suggestion must come from them. From the porter—why not? or from Stewart? This had been my course of reasoning; there was no other way of getting a sight of Hoffmann. If he were Hannay he would not stir out of Selby House; if he were a lunatic he could not stir out; in any case, to see him one must get inside—this seemed the only way of getting inside.

But I was not aware of one thing; the rules imposed upon the keepers of licensed houses, as the proprietors of lunatic asylums are termed, are very strict. No keeper or attendant can be employed without a license from the Commissioners in Lunacy. I was unprovided with such a license; to obtain it I must really leave the police force, get a reference from my superiors, lose my chances of promotion and pension, and, perhaps—nay, probably, after all these arrangements, find out that Hoffmann was not Hannay at all.

Stewart returned; he drew a pipe from his pocket. "I've got just a quarter of an hour off, Dryland," he said, as he carefully filled and lighted it. "You look dull, my man. What is it?"

I told him the tale I had told the porter. I clothed my naked lie in the details of probability; to my great relief he believed me; he did more, he sympathized with me.

"So you left rather than be put upon," said he. "I'd have done the same."

"You wouldn't have liked to have seen a younger man put over your head, would you?" said I, with, as I trusted, the air of a deeply injured man.

"No! I shouldn't, you showed a proper spirit;" here he began to smoke reflectively. The porter, who, though hungry, was a sympathizer too, here broke in, "What are you going to do?"

"I haven't an idea," I said.

"How about references?" said Stewart.

"Oh, they are right. I resigned; I wasn't dismissed."

"Would you like our line?" said Stewart.

"I shouldn't mind," said I.

"Stay where you are," said he, rising hurriedly; "I think I have a billet you might drop into at once."

"Here?" said I.

"Yes, here."

He left us; after a few moments a bell rang, the porter, with a nod and a smile to me, went indoors—evidently the servants' dinner bell. Things were looking up; I should be engaged, I should be surely engaged, Stewart would speak for me, and I should see—see whom?—well, perhaps, Sigismund Hannay? But arrest him—if it were he—that was another matter; let me but see him, I asked for no more.

Stewart returned. "Step this way," said he. I went through a series of well-appointed offices, then into what was the front hall; there were no bolts or bars, everything was solid, very good; an old house, a fine old house, a big wide wooden staircase at the end of the hall, at the foot of the staircase was a green baize door. Stewart tapped gently—"Come in!"—we entered.

Stewart saluted. "This is James Dryland, sir."

A dark little man, dressed in shining black, looked at me with a furtive glance—it was the criminal look—there was no mistaking it; he dropped his eyelids with a sigh, and he never looked me straight in the face again.

"You wish to serve here?" he said softly.

"I should be glad to, sir."

"You are aware of the duties? You can keep your temper under provocation—even extreme provocation?"

"Yes, sir."

"That will do. He will have to attend at the Commissioners' Office. When he has got the necessary papers he can come, say in three days. Explain it to him, Stewart. That will do."

"Is that all sir?"

"That is all." The furtive eye dropped on the big account-book open before him, the white hand followed the columns of figures, he had ceased to be aware of our existence. We left the room. Stewart congratulated me, and while he explained to me the steps I must take, the hope of getting a look at the man, Hoffmann, died within me. How could I resign on the chance of his being Hannay?

"Look round in the evening at 9, and we can take a glass," said Stewart, "and I'll tell you all about it, and put you up to the ropes."

I thanked Stewart effusively, and promising to call for him at 9, took my leave. I dined at a coffee-house, I sat and thought it over. Yes, I was as far off as ever; if I was ever to see the man, I must see him, must arrest him in fifty hours; ten hours were gone. This thought came vividly to my mind as I put my hand in my pocket for my handkerchief and touched the inspector's superior pair of special handcuffs. How many guilty wrists had they not clasped? Were they ever destined to be clasped over those of Sigismund Hannay? My spirits sank; I felt that on handing back those natty handcuffs, unused, to my inspector, the next step would be to go into the sergeants' room and write my resignation. I took an aimless walk. Five minutes to 9. I walked again round Selby House—a large place, windows mostly lighted up, patients retiring for the night, as I knew. Nine. I let a minute or two elapse, then I rang the bell, and was admitted by the porter; he stretched out his hand in a friendly way.

"I hear you are to be one of us," said he.

"I fancy so," I replied.

Stewart, ready for walking, entered the courtyard; several men of respectable appearance accompanied him.

"We're all free till 11, Dryland," said Stewart, introducing them to me by a wave of the hand. "New attendant," said he; late of the police."

I drew myself up. They all shook hands with me, and all seemed friendly. No chance to see him to-night, evidently. The porter advanced to let us out—when suddenly a shout broke from the interior of the building—"FIRE!"

We looked at each other. The kitchen-door was flung open, one of the kitchen-maids, pale as ashes, rushed out, into our midst, as we stood in the little courtyard. "Fire!" she shrieked. "Fire! in the ground floor corridor!"

There was no hesitation; each man pushed rapidly through the kitchen-door, Stewart among the rest. "Come on," he said, "you can be of use here."

The place was old and full of wood; there were no hydrants, there was no water. I smelt the smoke already, as I followed close at Stewart's heels. We ran all together in a body to a door; Stewart opened it—a long passage half full of smoke, not a soul visible; shrieks and shouts were heard; "This way! this way!" We passed through an open door into a bare gravelled yard; there stood a young man, his face very pale, his hands terribly burned, his hair, whiskers, and eyebrows singed.

"They are all safe—all safe I think; but we can't count them, they will move about, it is impossible," said the young man. This was the doctor; he was not excited, far from it, his wits were about him. Here my police education came to my aid; my practised eye ran quickly over the half-dressed patients.

"There are forty-eight, sir," I said.

"Who are you, man?" said the doctor, apparently alarmed.

"New attendant engaged this morning, sir—joins in a day or two," chimed in Stewart; "ex-policeman."

"Are you sure, man," said the doctor, "only forty-eight?"

"Only forty-eight, sir."

"Men," said he, to the attendants, "do you miss any one?"

They all ran their eyes over the confused mob.

"Mr. Hoffmann is not here, sir," said Stewart.

"Heavens! it's true,' cried the doctor.

Stewart turned pale. "He's my case, sir," he groaned, "and if he's lost I'm a ruined man."

"Come on, Dryland," he said to me, and, following him, I re-entered the house.

A huge alarm bell now began to ring, the flames which had got well hold of the building began to light up the sky. I saw that as we rushed into the house again.

"This way," muttered Stewart. We flew up the staircase; at the top of it we met the proprietor. "Are they all out?" he screamed.

"All but Mr. Hoffmann, sir."

"Great heavens!" he cried, but he made no attempt to move. The firing of his premises had evidently unnerved him; he covered his face with his hands. On ran Stewart; he stopped at a closed door at the end of a long passage, 14 was painted in small white figures on it; there was a circular piece of brass in the middle of the door, but the door was locked. Stewart felt in his pockets for the key.

"I must go back for it, "he said. "Come."

"I will stay here," I said.

Stewart did not reply; he ran hurriedly off by the way he came.

I examined the door, hoping to force it. No, it was too strong. I raised the small round piece of brass; a circular peephole, glazed, came to my view. I could see into the room; the chamber candle was lighted, a man with his back to me lay upon the bed, a novel was on the coverlet, he had fallen asleep reading; the candle placed on a chair illuminated his curly chestnut hair. But I could not see his face. His was the end room of the corridor. A window with a light sash was at this end, on either side closed doors; at the other end the staircase. I hammered furiously on the door. "Fire!" I cried, "Fire!" I kicked, I battered at it, I rushed from the other side of the passage at it; it was too strong for me. I looked in once more; the man was awake, he turned to me, it was the face as I verily believed of Sigismund Hannay. "Fire! Fire!" I shouted, my eye still at the peephole; the handsome face turned pale. The right eye began to blink. "The Winker," alias Sigismund Hannay, was before me; there was no doubt. I rushed to the head of the staircase; it was in flames—in flames. Everything had turned pink. This was why Stewart did not return; there was no other exit.

Stay, the window at the end of the passage! I rushed to it, I broke a pane; the sash was steel, solid steel; the apparently light window was a grating of the strongest kind.

"Have you nothing to try and break the door with, Mr. Hoffmann?" cried I; he was already dressed.

"Himmel!" he cried, "I have nothing to try with." He spoke with a slight German accent.

We should be burned alive together, I and my prey, the prey I was cheated of, only to die slowly by fire. I heard a cheer; something struck the window. A moment after, a form was on the sill, then a second—two firemen—one plied an axe, the other a crowbar, they worked rapidly and scientifically. Crash! The steel window frame fell inward, the two men sprang in.

"In here," I cried; "he's in here."

"What, one of the madmen?"

"Yes, the last one."

"Is he very bad? Is there much danger in him?" repeated the man—the brave man, who was ready at a moment's notice to risk his life amid fire and flame and falling walls for a paltry stipend.

"Get the door open and I'll secure him," said I.

A few strokes on the door-jamb with his sharp axe, and the long crowbar of the second man is inserted; the door yields, it opens. Hoffmann rushed into my arms, the men stood back, in an instant I had the handcuffs on him.

"What does this violence mean?" he hissed, winking furiously with his right eye in nervous trepidation.

"They are afraid of you, that's all, sir. I told them there was no need."

"Be smart. Be smart!" cried the fireman nearest me. I helped Hoffmann to the window. The crowd below, on seeing us, cheered loudly. "Go first," said the fireman. I knew the escapes. I stepped lightly into the canvas slide; in an instant I was in the street, a hundred eager hands were stretched to grasp mine. In another instant Hoffmann, handcuffed, slid down the canvas trough, and was beside me. The crowd stood back.

"One of the lunatics, see his handcuffs—he's dangerous—stand back!" I hustled the bewildered Hoffmann through the crowd. A hansom stood at a near corner. We got in; Hoffman, more dead than alive, sank into the corner of the cab. I whispered to the cabman where to drive, and took my place by the shuddering Hoffmann.

"Where are we going?" said he.

"To another asylum," said I.

"Take these things off," said he.

"I can't just yet," said I.

"Can't! What do you mean?"

I placed one hand on his shoulder, the other on his fettered wrists, and I whispered in his ear, "Sigismund Hannay, I arrest you for felony—take it coolly, sir."

"Himmel!" he muttered—not a word more.

We got to Scotland Yard. I took him into the office of the inspector on duty; it was Inspector Roberts. I charged him. He acknowledged it all. As he did so his right eye never left off its winking; Sigismund Hannay and "the Winker" were one.

Stewart never forgave me. We never found out how Hannay had squared the proprietor of the asylum—it was all hushed up. The proprietor was burnt to death in the blazing staircase of Selby House. Poor fellow, he lost his head in his ruin, for the property was uninsured.

Sigismund Hannay pleaded guilty; he got fourteen years—most of the bonds were got back. I had a good bit out of it, one way and the other.

Yes, these are the identical handcuffs; Inspector Roberts gave them to me as a keepsake.—(The Cornhill.

WILLIAM'S CROWN.

Paris Letter to The Jewellers' Weekly.

Emperor William has a much smaller head than his father and grandsire, and the imperial crown, therefore, does not fit him. A new one was ordered several months ago, and it was sent to Berlin on Monday, the 14th. This new emblem of sovereignty weighs less than three pounds, although made of massive gold; therefore the head beneath will not be so uneasy after all. It is ornamented with 109 diamonds, the ball which surmounts it consisting of a simple polished sapphire.

The Empress is also to have a new crown as well as her lord and master. There will be less gold about it and more stones, 1,500 diamonds of different sizes mixed with a few pearls.

JULIA'S QUICKNESS.

From The Youths' Companion.

Julia didn't like to go to school, and complained a great deal of feeling ill. Her mother tried to find out what ailed her, and asked a great many questions. There seemed to be no trouble with her head or stomach. "Do you have any pain?" she asked. "No, mamma." "Where do you feel the worst, dear?" said mamma. "In school," said Julia.

WHAT HOUSEKEEPERS PUT UP WITH.

From Good Housekeeping.

If housekeepers everywhere would start and maintain a crusade against the sale of undrawn poultry in the markets or by farmers it would work a most wholesome hygienic reform. It is a vicious practice, an abuse, in fact, that people have endured as they have many other abuses, because there is no remedy except in concerted action or legislation. It is impossible to keep undrawn poultry even a few hours, without the beginning of putrefaction from the effects of the gases from the undigested food in the "crop" and intestines. The longer it is kept, the more of the poison goes into the flesh, and in the majority of cases the poultry that reaches the kitchen from the market is actually unfit for food. Housekeepers could well afford to pay a larger price to have the poultry dressed immediately upon being killed—they pay for much weight that is thrown away, as it is, besides having left a mass of poisoned flesh. It is urged that some people prefer the flavor of undressed poultry, but that fact only makes the matter the more alarming, since it indicates that we are cultivating a taste for putrid meat. Can we not have a reform?

BEHIND THE TIMES.

From The Washington Post.

We fear that Doctor Stevens, of Philadelphia, has been imposed upon. He tells us that he has discovered the location of the human soul; that it is situated in the corpus callosum. We are constrained to think the doctor has been exploring in some old-fashioned cadaver, for we are assured by many authorities in the social world, that it is no longer deemed good form to wear souls in the corpus callosum. Indeed, the most fashionable people, we are told, have discarded the practice of wearing souls at all; it is so bothersome to look after a soul and a pug dog at one and the same time.

BALLAD OF THE KING'S MERCY.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, of him is the story told.
His mercy fills the Khyber hills—his grace is manifold;
He has taken toll of the North and the South—his glory reacheth far;
And they tell the tale of his charity from Balkh to Candahar.

Before the old Peshawur Gate, where Kurd and Kaffir meet,
The Governor of Cabul dealt the Justice of the Street,
And that was strait as running noose and swift as plunging knife,
Tho' he who held the longer purse might hold the longer life.

There was a hound of Hindustan had struck a Euzufzai,
Wherefore they spat upon his face and led him out to die.
It chanced the King went forth that hour when throat was bared to knife;
The Kaffir grovelled under-hoof and clamored for his life.

Then said the King: "Have hope, O friend! Yea, Death disgraced is hard;
Much honor shall be thine"; and called the Captain of the Guard,
Yar Khan, a bastard of the Blood, so city-babble saith,
And he was honored of the King—the which is salt to Death;
And he was son of Daoud Shah, the Reiver of the Plains,
And blood of old Durani Lords ran fire in his veins;
And 'twas to tame an Afghan pride nor Hell nor Heaven could bind,
The King would make him butcher to a yelping cur of Hind.

"Strike!" said the King. "King's blood art thou—his death shall be his pride!"
Then louder, that the crowd might catch: "Fear not—his arms are tied!"
Yar Khan drew clear the Khyber knife, and struck, and sheathed again.
"O man, thy will is done," quoth he; "a King this dog hath slain."

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, to the North and the South is sold.
The North and the South shall open their mouth to a Ghilzai flag unrolled,
When the big guns speak to the Khyber peak, and his dog-Heratis fly,
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long? Wolves of the Abazai!

That night before the watch was set, when all the streets were clear,
The Governor of Cabul spoke: "My King, hast thou no fear?
"Thou knowest—thou hast heard"—his speech died at his master's face.
And grimly said the Afghan King: "I rule the Afghan race.
"My path is mine—see thou to thine—to-night upon thy bed
Think who there be in Cabul now that clamor for thy head."

That night when all the gates were shut to city and to Throne,
Within a little garden-house the King lay down alone.
Before the sinking of the moon, which is the Night of Night,
Yar Khan came softly to the King to make his honor white.
The children of the town had mocked beneath his horse's hoofs,
The harlots of the town had hailed him butcher! from their roofs.

But as he groped against the wall, two hands upon him fell,
A voice behind his shoulder spake: "Dead man, thou dost not well!
"'Tis ill to jest with Kings by day and seek a boon by night;
"And that thou bearest in thy hand is all too sharp to write.
"But three days hence, if God be good, and if thy strength remain,
"Thou shalt demand one boon of me and bless me in thy pain.
"For I am merciful to all, and most of all to thee.
"My butcher of the shambles, rest—no knife hast thou for me."

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, holds hard by the South and the North;
But the Ghilzai knows, ere the melting snows, when the swollen banks break forth,
When the red-coats crawl to the Sungar wall, and the Usbeg lances fail,
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long? Wolves of the Zuka Kheyl!

They stoned him in the rubbish-field when dawn was in the sky.
According to a written word, "See that he do not die."
They stoned him till the stones were piled above him on the plain,
And those the laboring limbs displaced they tumbled back again.

One watched beside the dreary mound that veiled the battered thing,
And him the King with laughter called the Herald of the King.

It was upon the second night, the night of Ramazan,
The watcher leaning earthward heard the message of Yar Khan.
From shattered breast through shrivelled lips broke forth the rattling breath:
"Creature of God, deliver me from agony of Death."

They sought the King among his girls, and risked their lives thereby:
"Protector of the Pitiful, give order that he die!"

"Bid him endure until the day," a lagging answer came;
"The night is short, and he can pray and learn to bless my name."

Before the dawn three times he spoke, and on the day once more:
"Creature of God, deliver me and bless the King therefore!"

They shot him at the morning prayer, to ease him of his pain,
And when he heard the matchlock clink, he blessed the King again.

Which thing the singers made a song for all the world to sing,
So that the Outer Seas may know the Mercy of the King.

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, of him is the story told.
He has opened his mouth to the North and the South, they have stuffed his mouth with gold.
Ye know the truth of his tender ruth—and sweet his favors are.
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long?—from Balkh to Candahar.

YUSSUF.

THE GREAT FRITH-OF-FORTH BRIDGE.

From The Glasgow Herald.

The Forth bridge is a new addition to the wonders of the world. It is the greatest cantilever bridge in the world, and the forerunner of all modern cantilever structures. It has the longest span of any bridge on the globe; it is the most ponderous, and probably it is safe to say the strongest. In its whole aspect it is unprecedented, and to the lay mind at all events it is astounding. It soars skyward until all neighboring natural heights are dwarfed, and it stretches out its long arms till one imagines their ends will never come. . . . It has been calculated that the chief struts of the bridge would stand a thrust of more than 48,000 tons before showing signs of giving way. A pull of 45,000 tons would be required to tear asunder the top ties of the cantilevers, while the greatest pull from passing trains will be less than 2,000 tons. Mr. Baker considers that half a dozen ironclads could be hung from the cantilever ends. If the much-boasted Eiffel Tower were laid on its side, it would be pretty much equivalent to one-half of one of the spans of the Forth bridge. The cost of this great railroad bridge will be about $10,000,000.